

Kenneth Young Center White Space Proposal

Kenneth Young Center (KYC) is a 501(c)3 community based mental health provider located in the Northwest suburbs of Chicago (FEIN 23-7181444). In addition to over 40 years of direct service experience, KYC provides EHR software to behavioral health agencies throughout Illinois. We wish to submit a proposal for the white space grant because of our potential to impact so many providers across the state.

What is the scope of your proposal?

Our project proposes to connect up to 100 behavioral health providers, now white space entities, to ILHIE Direct and integrate the information into their EHR over the course of one year. This would include assisting them to sign up for ILHIE Direct and programming our EHR to integrate data from external healthcare providers as well as share our service summaries with them to improve healthcare communication and, as a result, overall care. This would also position our EHR to complete certification within the year, potentially assisting almost 50 organizations to have a state of the art information system.

We have done an initial survey of ILHIE utilization by our EHR users and discovered that 72% are not connected. Of the “connected” group, 14% have used it to receive information but very little and 14% are signed up (so not considered white space) but have not used it.

How will you assist connected white space entities to utilize HIE services in the delivery of care?

Beside the provision of software, an important component of our ongoing service to agencies that use Custom Information Solutions System (CIS), is the provision of upgrades and consultation that improve care. Historically, when billing rules or data requirements changed, we made those upgrades available to all CIS users. Clinical data exchange with other service providers (hospitals, doctors etc.) is the next logical step in this process. Data to and from other healthcare contacts will reduce errors, decrease time lag and improve overall care and outcomes.

Strategically we have planned an ILHIE button on our information system which, if we are selected, will provide programming time to allow CIS to translate data received from the ILHIE Direct into the EHR. The reverse will also be made possible- that is, to transmit data from CIS to hospitals and other healthcare providers via ILHIE Direct. This information is extremely important in all aspects of healthcare as people move from one setting to another and the information from all sources becomes part of the client chart, not just the part the source creates. Service summaries from other providers can integrate gaps in knowledge that occur when access is not available in real time.

Summary of organizational experience in health information technology and working with health care providers

15 years ago Kenneth Young Center developed its own information system/ medical record. After hearing by word of mouth, other community based mental health centers began requesting to use its software. Presently, almost 50 providers use CIS and it has a larger market share of Illinois community mental health software users than all commercial vendors combined. Users include large and small, rural and urban and comprise over 50% of the Illinois community mental health centers that use an electronic system. Currently, another six agencies are in active consideration of acquiring CIS. We have attached a full list of partners as an addendum.

CIS is a fully functional electronic medical record that includes modules for billing, mental health assessment, treatment planning, medication prescriptions and log, scheduling and progress notes. Kenneth Young Center is a registered user of ILHIE Direct and has used this for client information exchange.

This technology has been integrated into virtually everything we do. It begins with the initial call, where information begins to be entered into a digital face sheet that is the first part of populating the Mental Health Assessment, which flows in to the Individual Treatment Plan. Progress notes track each session and these are connected to a billing system and scheduler. The system also allows users to see real time productivity to targets and also track compliance functions.

System development began 15 years ago and we have added modules gradually over time. Initially modules included progress notes and billing. Compliance/ productivity functions were added. Scheduling, more sophisticated billing, and HR components were subsequently added. More recently assessment, treatment planning and physician modules were added. The fact that we have impact on the design of so many medical records is an indication of the statewide impact we could have on care integration if we were able to add health exchange integration into our system.

Currently, for most of our software users, information exchanged with other health providers is done via telephone and fax due to the security limits of regular email. Using the ILHIE Direct which offers encrypted and secure electronic communication, we can safely and efficiently exchange medical documents with other health care providers. This will help overcome problems such as information delay, unreadable copy and redundant data entry and minimize the risk of missing and incomplete documents.

In addition to ILHIE Direct, we are moving toward certification in electronic information exchange with an e-Prescribing company. This includes is a real-time two-way exchange (via a secured channel using XML) of patient demographics, problems, medications and allergies. Medications for a patient prescribed elsewhere will also be available to our doctors.

In addition to now working directly with a very large number of behavioral health provider organizations, Kenneth Young Center is currently working with a new federally funded project in partnership with St. Alexius Hospital to provide enhanced discharge planning for seniors at the hospital. This project is intended to reduce the number of readmissions to the hospital within 30 days and focuses on linking discharged patients to services in the community. The research has shown this to be successful and we expect it will demonstrate enhanced client health outcomes and avoid Medicare reductions for the hospital.

We are also planning a project with a Federally Qualified Health Center, VNA Health, to begin offering primary care services within our community mental health setting. This will involve health information exchange and a high degree of coordination.

The initial goal for this project will be enhanced numbers of organizations and providers capable of digital client information exchange. This will lead to improved linkages which could reduce the readmission rates for these clients.

Another result would be improved accuracy of medications prescribed at release of service. This, of course, reduces the chance of medical errors by the next prescribing physician. It also allows a clearer picture of the history of prescriptions.

A third strategy is to reduce paper transactions. We receive hundreds of pages of faxes per day and beside the ecological waste and time delay, there is the possibility that they could be misfiled in the wrong mailbox. If they were emailed to a particular person, the chances of this drop substantially.

We believe Kenneth Young Center is well positioned to be an excellent candidate to receive this grant due to broad contact across the state with many white space organizations. We have a long history of use, design and training to maximize effectiveness of an EHR. The services of the agencies using CIS interface with hundreds of hospitals and other healthcare providers. We have letters in support of our proposal from Alexian Brothers Behavioral Health Hospital, our local psychiatric inpatient hospital as well as Ecker Center, our nearest community mental health center. We have service agreement with a large number of organizations who utilize our information system and a successful interface in this project will not only help the thousands of clients we serve, it will additionally have impact with up to 50 other agencies who use our EHR and the hospitals/healthcare professionals they contact.

Thank you for considering our proposal.

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